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Symphony

9 October 1946

TO: Commanding Officer,
SSU WD Mission to Austria

FOR: DALL

FROM: Acting Chief, FBI

SUBJECT: "Report on Jewish Escape Routes," Furnished G-2 UNRRA.

1. Thank you for LEX-599 containing subject report. The good field assembling and presentation of this material makes it possible to use this report with very little additional processing.

2. Information in this report has also been passed on to two customer agencies here in Washington.

DECLASSIFIED AND RELEASED BY
CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
SOURCE METHOD EXEMPTION 3B2E
NAZI WAR CRIMES DISCLOSURE ACT
DATE 2006

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Synonymy

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LSX 399

26 August 1946

TO: SAINT
FROM: Saint Austria DD III
SUBJECT: Transmittal of Attached Report Furnished G-2 USFA,
Subject: "Jewish Escape Routes".

1. For your information.
2. Attached report was furnished AC of S, G-2 USFA, upon their request.

Incl - Report

Distribution:

2 Washington ✓
1 SCI/A Vienna (Cover ltr only)
1 Files

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Vienna Memo No. 497.
16 August 1946.

TO: AC of S, G-2, USFA. (Attn: Lt. Col. Hoyne)
FROM: SCI/A.
SUBJECT: Jewish Escape Routes.

1. Attached is a report made up from our files. It will provide the desired information on Jewish escape routes as well as furnish much interesting and fruitful reading.

2. The attached is for your retention.

RUFUS S. CRANE
SCI/A, Vienna.

Pencilled note on info copy to Salzburg of this Vienna Memo:

Source - LVX 216
(extracts and deletions)

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A. THE SO-CALLED JEWISH UNDERGROUND EMIGRATION MOVEMENT.

1. The exodus of Jews from Russian-occupied countries is an exact replica of the vast legal or illegal emigration movement which began at the ascension of the Nazi Party in Germany around 1932. Hundreds of thousands of Jews fled Germany with the aid of Jewish communities of countries neighboring Germany, (Holland, Denmark, Sweden, Norway, Belgium, France, Switzerland, Czechoslovakia, etc.), to find their way to any country in Europe or into Palestine. When Germany completely closed its borders, this smuggling had to become clandestine. High Nazi officials, officially or unofficially, were paid large sums to facilitate the emigration of Jews; the Gestapo made a real business out of it. Refugee committees were set up in the neighboring countries to help the Jews in their transit through the free countries and to facilitate their emigration to America or to Palestine. These refugee committees were financed either by collections and contributions from their members or rich Jews in free countries. When the finances of these committees were not sufficient, the deficits were made up by the American Joint Distribution Committee, through its representatives in these various countries. The American Joint Distribution Committee also financed, supervised and arranged for transport and settlement of the persecuted Jews either in Palestine or in the United States.

2. As the war drew near and border restrictions became more and more stringent, the Political Section of the Jewish Agency ~~organized~~ organized a special section whose duties it was to contact the Jewish communities in German-occupied countries. This section had its own couriers who brought letters and money to the remnants of the Jewish communities in Nazi-dominated countries and smuggled "Jewish" intelligence out of these countries. Headquarters of this section were established in Switzerland (Berne and Zurich) and in Turkey (Istanbul). The various British Intelligence services freely used the emissaries of this section for penetration and intelligence purposes. The representatives of the AJDC acted as liaison with the Allied Intelligence Services and eventually financed this courier-cum-intelligence service.

B. THE PRESENT JEWISH UNDERGROUND MOVEMENT IN AUSTRIA.

1. The present emigration "underground" movement is simply a continuation of the one which provided the Allied Intelligence Services and principally the Jewish Agency with valuable intelligence during this war.

SECRET CONTROL

SECRET

CONTROL

-2-

2. The present emigration started officially as a Jewish action to help those Jews who had escaped the tortures of the concentration camps, to feed and clothe them and to further their emigration either to the United States or to Palestine, legally or illegally. These "transit camps for former concentration camp inmates and political prisoners", established in the US Zone were, and are still, located in Mauthausen, Bindermichl, near Linz, Bad Gastein, Wels, Freilassing, Bavaria, and are helped by local Jewish committees, the UNRRA, and (later) by the AJDC representatives, who had arrived in the meantime.

3. Slowly a road was established through which these persecuted Jews were to find their way to Palestine, or, if not, to the United States. Those wanting to go to Palestine were directed to Italy, over the French-occupied zone of Austria and the Brenner Pass. The various Red Cross organizations helped to further this emigration. Once the refugees were in Italy, a boat service was arranged from Genoa (or near-by ports) to transport the refugees to Greece, where they would eventually find their way into Palestine.

4. Anti-Semitism began to flare up in the countries now occupied by the Russians, and conditions became worse for Jews in general, so the Jewish Agency of Palestine began again the work which it had done during the war against Germany. The same plan is being used. This time the headquarters of the organization is in Vienna, at apartment No. 6, Frankgasse 2, Vienna IX.

C. EMIGRATION OF JEWS INTO AUSTRIA ORGANIZED BY THE JEWISH AGENCY.

1. The present emigration movement of Jews from Roumania, Hungary, Czechoslovakia and Poland, is one which is unofficially tolerated by the commanders of the United States Forces in Austria, and by Staff G-5 of the same headquarters. It is financed or provided with other material help by the American Joint Distribution Committee, through its chief American representative, SACHS, in Vienna, or its local American representative in Salzburg, RICE. Both these offices act in liaison with the DP. section, Vienna Area Command, or UEFA, and with UNRRA authorities, who have representatives in the various Jewish DP camps in the American Zone of Austria.

2. There are two kinds of Jews who want to emigrate. The young ones, who belong to a Zionist organization in some Balkan country and who have been trained for emigration and settlement in Palestine by doing agricultural training in some farms in their country of origin. When they are ready to leave, their local committees contact Jewish agents in their particular country,

SECRET

CONTROL

and transportation is arranged for them. Groups are formed of about twenty or thirty under their own leaders, with whom they will go to Palestine. When there is some space available in the special Jewish transit camp in Vienna, located at the primary school in the Alserbacher Strasse, Vienna IX, the "transport leaders" contact them, arrange for transportation and bring them into Vienna by rail. Exit permission for any country except Poland is easy to obtain and no papers are checked at any frontier guard station. In Czechoslovakia, a frontier guard watches the train to ascertain that nobody remains in Czechoslovakian territory. The Russian authorities do not check any papers. This procedure is slightly differed as to the exit from Poland. As the Lublin government does not allow any official emigration, the crossing of the borders by these transports is done illegally by the Jewish agents. Once in Czechoslovakia, the groups take the train and cross the Czech-Austrian border, where they finally arrive at Florisdorf, near Vienna. Actual crossing points at the Polish-Czech border have not yet been ascertained. The organized groups of future Palestine colonists await their transit to other camps and either with Palestinian immigration certificates or without them, find their way into Palestine. These groups are known to their chiefs, who have trained with them in their country of origin. They belong to all shades of Zionist organizations from the extreme rightist Revisionists (BETHAR or BRITH TRUMPELDOR) to the socialist HASCHOMER HAZAIR. These groups are enthusiastic Zionists and may later form the backbone of a Jewish Army. Their ages range from fourteen to thirty. They are not specifically religious. A special DP camp for extremely religious young immigrants has been established at a house located at Goldschlaggasse 27, Vienna XV. Many of the young immigrants have been enrolled during this war in the Soviet Army in various capacities. Thus, one of the groups recently was headed by a young Jew who had been a Major in the Soviet Army.

3. The other kind of emigrant is composed of any element of Jew wanting to emigrate. Any Jew in his respective country who desires to leave his country reports to an AJDC committee in Bucharest, Budapest, Bratislava, Breslau, Lwow, etc., and applies for a place in a group. Very little screening is done at this stage. As soon as the groups are formed, messengers (SHNLIKIM) are sent out who pick up the groups at the starting point. This is done only if there is space available at the Vienna Jewish DP camps. If the transport originates from Roumania, Hungary, or Czechoslovakia, the messenger receives the lists of people from the group leaders, who are appointed on the spot from one of the members of a group. It is to be noted here that the self-appointed group leaders do not know the members of their groups

before the departure, which leaves open any opportunity of anyone's slipping into the group who is either not Jewish or is a Jew who joins the group for other purposes than pure emigration. The messenger then takes the groups by rail to Vienna where they are registered in a DP camp and then await transportation to the next camp. It has happened frequently that non-Jews have slipped into these groups and were lodged in the Jewish DP camps. After a short time their Christian, or "other" status, is found out, and frequent instances have occurred where such black sheep have been discovered, thoroughly beaten up, and then delivered to the US Military Police. If the emigration of such miscellaneous groups is to be made from Poland, the messengers smuggle the groups over the Czech-Polish frontier with the help of local Jewish Committees. Once the Czech frontier is crossed the groups take the train for Bratislava, whence they take some train which will bring them to Floridsdorf.

4. Recently the Austrian Red Cross has been helping the emigration of miscellaneous groups from Poland into Austria. When this happens, a representative of the Austrian Red Cross is added to the transport. The transport is formed in Breslau, headed by the Austrian Red Cross man and a messenger, they take a train which leads to Zebrydowice (Poland), from there cross into Czechoslovakia, arrive in Bugumin (CSR), Breslav (CSR), Bernostve (CSR), and from there a train transports them to Floridsdorf, near Vienna. The only control is by the Czech frontier guard at Bugumin, whence a frontier guard remains on the train until it reaches Floridsdorf, to make sure that no one remains in Czech territory.

D. JEWISH DP CAMPS IN VIENNA.

1. There are two large and two smaller Jewish DP camps in Vienna, supervised by the AJDC, the DP Sections Vienna Area Command, and USFA. They are all situated in the US occupied zone of Vienna.

2. The biggest one is situated in the former Rothschild Hospital, at the Währinger Viertel, Vienna IX. (It has a capacity of 750, but has upon occasions housed as many as 1300 refugees. The taking over of a large establishment next door, which would increase the capacity of the camp to 2000, has been contemplated.) Here the miscellaneous refugees arrive. They are registered and summarily screened. Further interrogation may be given in special cases. They remain here until the possibility arises of sending them on to the next stop, the Jewish transit camp at Enns. The exact list of arrivals is not given to the DP officer, who has an office in the building. This permits the Jewish Agency to transport anyone they desire without revealing the identity. The

Rothschild DP camp is administered by a permanent staff paid by the AJDC in Vienna. Actually, it is run by Jewish Agency agents who are blindly obedient to the Agency.

3. The next biggest DP camp is situated at the primary school at the Alserbacherstrasse. It has a capacity of 350. It is exclusively reserved for organized groups of young Jewish future colonists. The youths are not allowed to leave the place during their stay in Vienna. The camp received the material help of the AJDC and of UNRRA. It is again run by a small staff of permanent members who obey only the Jewish Agency.

4. The third smallest is the house at Goldschlaggasse 27, Vienna XV (the only one in the French Zone). It is exclusively reserved for Jewish refugees who obey strictly the religious and dietary laws, but who are still trained for colonists' work in Palestine.

5. The smallest camp is situated at apartment No. 2, Frankhgasse, Vienna IX (near USFA Headquarters). It houses about two dozen Jewish refugees. ~~and is run by the Jewish Agency.~~ It is officially known as an 'American transit camp for Jewish former concentration camp inmates'. Lists of arriving refugees everywhere else are drawn up here. Arrivals and departures of convoys from the various countries are coordinated here.

E. OTHER JEWISH DP CAMPS IN AUSTRIA.

1. Apart from the number of Jewish DP camps already named, there are a number of transit camps which constitute the chain to transport the incoming refugees from the Balkans either to Palestine or to Germany (ultimate destination, the USA?).

2. As soon as room is open in the next camps, the Jewish refugees are moved out of Vienna by trucks and transported to transit camps at Enns. Generally they only stay in Vienna about three or four days, but owing to the closing of the frontiers in Germany, refugees are in Vienna more than three weeks. Another transit camp is situated at Wels. The Russian authorities at the Enns bridge do not question the transports, of which they see only a total list submitted by the UNRRA man who accompanies every transport. On the permanent staff of both the Enns camp and the Wels camp are men of the Jewish Agency.

3. The refugees who do not intend to go to Palestine are then transported to Freilassing in Bavaria, where again no check is made by the military authorities, as there is a lack of official orders about this transit. Again a general list is submitted and the personalities of the refugees are not checked by any security agency.

CONTROL SECRET

-6-

4. The refugees intending to go to Palesting or at least to Italy are directed to Salzburg, where they are housed in Mulln camp (capacity, about 250 men). This camp is supervised by a local UNRRA team and aided materially by the Salzburg representative of the AJDC, RICE, and American citizen.

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